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Friday, February 29, 2008

News Release

Ministry of Northern Development and Mines

**Ontario**Northern Ontario
Heritage FundFonds du patrimoine
du Nord de l'Ontario

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Province Supports Rainy River Farmers - #955090

McGuinty Government On The Side Of Northerners

SUDBURY – The McGuinty government is helping farmers in the Rainy River District determine the viability of a new regional abattoir, Northern Development and Mines Minister Rick Bartolucci announced today.

“Northern Ontario’s beef industry is larger than that of any Atlantic province, and the Rainy River District contributes significantly to the industry,” said Bartolucci. “I am pleased that our government is supporting this project to strengthen the region’s livestock industry and its economy.”

The Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) is contributing \$30,000 to Rainy River District Regional Abattoir Inc. toward the development of a business plan that will include an investigation of markets for proposed products, building location, design and engineering, and an environmental assessment. With the closest abattoir located in Dryden, some 285 kilometres from Rainy River, the organization’s goal is to establish and operate a community abattoir servicing the livestock producers of the Rainy River District, and provide an opportunity for the slaughter, processing and sale of locally raised species, as well as for developing and marketing value-added products. A local abattoir would also reduce transportation costs for the farmers.

“Our government appreciates the importance of broadening the North’s economic foundations,” said Bartolucci, who also chairs the NOHFC. “That’s why we are committed to maximizing the North’s significant potential in renewable resources, such as the agriculture industry, to help build prosperity in Northern Ontario.”

“The Government of Ontario has been working with the cattle industry in the Rainy River area for some time to facilitate the construction of a licensed slaughter facility,” said Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Leona Dombrowsky. “This funding will help move that initiative forward.”

Other major initiatives by the McGuinty government for northerners include:

- Providing \$900 million in assistance for the forestry industry
- Ensuring quality drinking water in northern communities by investing more than \$33 million since

October 2003 toward upgrades to drinking water systems in the North

- Investing \$4 million to establish a Bio-Energy Research Centre in Atikokan.

Today's investment is part of the government's Northern Prosperity Plan. It has four pillars: Strengthening the North and its Communities; Listening to and Serving Northerners Better; Competing Globally; and Providing Opportunities for All.

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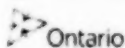
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